

US Virgin Islands Joint Information Center

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR|VITEMA|FEMA

website: www.vitema.gov/jic

5:00 AM Advisory, August 27, 2015

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TROPICAL STORM ERIKA STRENGTHENS, CENTER PASSING BETWEEN GUADELOUPE AND ANTIGUA WILL BEGIN TO EFFECT THE VIRGIN ISLANDS LATER THIS MORNING

At 5 a.m. the storm center was located some 240 miles southeast of the Virgin Islands near 16.8 degrees North, 61.5 degrees West. The storm is packing increased winds of 50 miles per hour with higher gusts. Little change in strength is forecast today. Tropical storm force winds extend outward up to 105 miles mainly to the north and east of the center. The storm is moving to the west at 16 miles per hour and a turn to the west-northwest is expected later today. Maximum sustained winds have increased to near 50 mph (85 km/h) with higher gusts. Little change in strength is forecast during the next 48 hours.

Tropical storm force winds extend outward up to 105 miles (165 km), mainly to the north and east of the center.

The latest minimum central pressure based on data from a NOAA Hurricane Hunter aircraft is 1003 mb (29.62 inches).

USVI Forecast

Several hours of tropical storm force winds associated with Tropical Storm Erika are expected to impact the Virgin Islands later today. The latest forecast calls for the storm center to be at its closest point to the territory at 8 pm tonight when Erika tracks to within ten miles of St. Thomas and St. John. At that time Erika is forecast to be a strong tropical storm with top winds of 60 miles per hour.

WIND: Sustained tropical storm force winds will begin to impact the Virgin Islands around 6 p.m. with St. Croix forecast to experience winds of 39 miles per hour for a six hour period. The highest sustained winds on the island will occur at 7 p.m. when wind speeds are expected to reach 45 miles per hour.

On St. John, 58 miles per hour sustained winds will occur from 7-9 p.m. and 39 miles per hour winds will continue until 2 a.m. Friday.

On St. Thomas the 58 miles per hour sustained winds will also arrive at 7 p.m. and continue for two hours. 39 miles per hour winds will continue until 3 a.m. Friday.

RAINFALL: Erika is expected to produce total rain accumulations of 3 to 5 inches with maximum amounts of 8 inches across portions of the Leeward Islands, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

Based on latest forecast model marine conditions will deteriorate by early this morning and the first rain bands could reach the area this morning. Rain could affect through Friday as the system moves to the west or west-northwest.

While there is uncertainty in the intensity and track forecast, most models continue to indicate a significant amount of tropical moisture over the local area with a good potential for significant rainfall over the region, according to the National Weather Service.

VITEMA and the National Weather Service are advising the public to begin taking preparedness steps and to closely monitor the track and forecast of Tropical Storm Erika. Stay tuned to local radio and television for weather updates and for more information and instructions from local government officials.

NEXT ADVISORY

Next intermediate advisory at 800 AM AST.

Next complete advisory at 1100 AM AST.

For more information about hurricane preparedness visit www.VITEMA.gov/hurricanes, www.Ready.gov or www.Listo.gov, or call VITEMA at 340-773-2244, 340-774-2244 or 340-776-2244.

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